1: Rivers E-5 (ca. 1901-02) 1906 Toda
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CHAPTER XI

THE DAIRY RITUAL

IN the preceding chapters I have given an account of an elaborate ritual wholly connected with the buffalo and with the dairy. This ritual is certainly of a religious character, and, though there is much in the nature of the dairy formulæ which is uncertain, there can be little doubt that they are intercessory and that they bring the dairy operations into definite relations with the Toda deities.

It seems most probable that the general idea underlying the dairy ritual is that the dairyman is dealing with a sacred substance, the milk of the buffaloes. This sacred substance is to be converted into other substances, butter and buttermilk, which are to be used by the profane. At the present time much of the butter goes to those who are not even Todas and are regarded by the Todas as inferior beings.

It seems most probable that the elaborate ritual has grown up as a means of counteracting the dangers likely to be incurred by this profanation of the sacred substance, or, in other words, as a means of removing a taboo which prohibits the general use of the substance.

Similarly the migration ceremonies have the general underlying idea of counteracting any possible evil influence which may accompany the passage of the buffaloes through the profane world from one sacred place to another. During the migration, objects may be seen by the multitude which under ordinary circumstances are strictly screened from the general gaze, and objects may be touched, or be in danger of being touched, by people who ordinarily may not even see them.

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182 771 783 788 796 Again, the ceremonies connected with entrance upon any dairy office are intended to purify the candidate and make him fit to see and touch and use the sacred objects.

The purpose of some of the other ceremonies is less obvious. The *irpalvusthi* ceremony seems to be of the nature of a thanksgiving, one of its most important features being a feast, but in this feast people may partake of the milk of sacred buffaloes, which is not ordinarily used by them, and there is a suggestive resemblance to those religious ceremonies in which communion is held with the divine by eating or drinking the divine.

The salt-giving ceremonies seem to point to a time when salt was difficult to procure. According to the Todas the object of these ceremonies is to ensure a plentiful supply of milk. There is a belief that salt is beneficial to the buffaloes, and the occasions on which the salt is given have become religious ceremonies which at the *ponup* of the *ti* have reached a high degree of elaboration with very special relations to the chief gods of the dairy. The ceremonies of making new *pep* are especially mysterious, and I will reserve some speculations as to the general idea underlying them till later (see p. 242).

Comparison of the Procedure of Different Dairies

234 783 788 778 One of the most striking features of the ritual in all its branches is its increasing elaboration and complexity from the lowest to the highest grade of dairy.

One of the details of the ritual which runs through the whole series of dairies is the separation between the vessels and objects which come into contact with the buffaloes or their milk, and those which come into contact with the outside world, or with the products of the churning which may go to the outside world.

In the proceedings with the milk of the ordinary buffaloes in the huts where the people live, there is, so far as I know, no distinction of this kind.

In the lowest grade of dairy we already meet with the

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by custom and tradition, and on the religious side this domination has taken a form in which ritual has become all-important, while the religious ideas which underlie the ritual have become blurred and unreal or have disappeared altogether. It seems to me that the Todas have had a religion of a comparatively high order for people living in such simple circumstances. During a long period of isolation there has come about an over-development of the ritual aspect of this religion. Year after year, and century after century, the priests have handed on the details of the ceremonial from one to another. The performance of the prescribed rites in their due order has become the all-essential of the religion and the ideas connected with it have suffered. This is shown most clearly in the prayers, in which we have seen that the prayer proper has gradually come to take a relatively subordinate position, and is even in danger of disappearing altogether, while the importance of the *kwarzam* by which the sacred objects of the dairy are mentioned has been magnified. The dairy utterances, which were probably at one time definite prayers calling on the gods for help and protection, are now on their way to become barren and meaningless formulæ.

Just as the prayer of the Todas seems to have almost degenerated into the utterance of barren formulæ, so is there reason to believe that the attitude of worship which is undoubtedly present in the Toda mind is becoming transferred from the gods themselves to the material objects used in the service of the gods. I acknowledge that I am here on less sure ground than in the case of the dairy formulæ, but the general impression left on my mind by the study of the beliefs and sacred institutions of the Todas is that the religious attitude of worship is being transferred from the gods themselves to the objects round which centres the ritual of the dairy. If I am right in these surmises, we find the Todas to possess a religion in process of degeneration. I do not suppose that this degeneration has been in progress only during the short time that the Todas have been exposed to the injurious contact of the outer world. The study of the Toda religion makes it seem to me most probable that the Todas came

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771 to the Nilgiri Hills with a religion of a higher order than they
778 possess at present, with a developed system of gods who were
782 believed to direct and govern the affairs of men, and that by
788 a long and slow process these gods have become unreal, the
182 supplications of the people for their guidance and assistance have become mechanical, and worship has been transferred from gods, not to stocks and stones, but to bells and dairy vessels.

771 At the present time it would seem that even the ritual of
788 the Toda religion is often carried out less carefully than of
182 old. Among the former occupants of dairy offices of whom I made inquiries, I found some who gave accounts so full of inaccuracies and omissions that it seemed unlikely that they could have performed the duties of their offices in a satisfactory manner, and when I had the opportunity of observing parts of the dairy ritual it seemed to me that the ceremonial acts were performed by some of the dairymen in a very perfunctory and slovenly fashion. We have already seen that some of the features of Toda ritual have entirely disappeared, and it seems not unlikely that the same fate may overtake the whole at no great distance of time.

183 In the case of both custom and ritual, the Todas are
771 now often content if they keep the letter of the law, and
784 several examples of the evasion of ceremonial laws have been recorded. We have seen that several of the laws concerning the *madnol* are certainly not kept in the spirit, and only by a stretch of imagination, in the letter. A woman evades the law that she may not leave the village on the *madnol* by leaving it before daybreak and returning after daybreak till her work is done. A man takes money out on the day before the *madnol* and, burying it elsewhere, is able to carry out business which the spirit of the law forbids. In ceremonies, ritual duties which involve discomfort or restraint are assigned to young boys, to whom the restraint is no restraint. A man goes near the *palol* whom properly he should not approach, but since he does not speak nor is spoken to, he is regarded as ceremonially absent.

Objects of value which should be burnt for the use of the dead are sent to the next world ceremonially by swinging

1: Rivers E-5 (ca. 1901-02) 1906 Toda

them over the fire, and are then removed. The emblems of womanhood are taken out of the hut when the *wursol* goes there to sleep, but the women themselves remain. Probably the behaviour of the *kaltmokh* in the sleeping hut during the ceremony after migration (p. 142) is a sign that he should not be there, and is evading an uncomfortable and perhaps dangerous custom.

The Todas seem to show us how the over-development of the ritual aspect of religion may lead to atrophy of those ideas and beliefs through which the religion has been built up and then how, in its turn, the ritual may suffer and acts which are performed mechanically, with no living ideas behind them, may come to be performed carelessly and incompletely, while religious observances which involve trouble or discomfort may be evaded or completely neglected. The Todas, in fact, show us, in little, the general traits characteristic of the degeneration of religion.

To people living in the simple surroundings and with the simple life of the Todas we might well look for material to help us to understand the evolution of religion, but, if I am right, we must look for this in vain. If the religion of the Todas is a product of degeneration, it is hopeless to seek among the customs of this people for evidence of the mode of growth of religious ideas and practices. Thus, it is natural that we find among the Todas no clear trace of totemism, or of those ideas connected with animals which are probably allied to totemism. There are several reasons why the Todas should not furnish any clear evidence of this frequent starting-point of religion. In the first place, they are people to whom one animal has become so predominantly sacred that it might be expected that any other relations with animals of a sacred character would have disappeared; the cult of animals in general would have been swamped in the cult of the buffalo. Secondly, if I am right in the supposition I have advanced in this chapter, it is probable that the Todas came to the Nilgiri Hills with the cult of the buffalo or other milk-giving animal already to some extent developed, and if at this time they had customs and beliefs connected with other animals, these would naturally soon disappear if these animals were

1: Rivers E-5 (ca. 1901-02) 1906 Toda

174 absent in the new country. At the same time, it is perhaps
182 not without significance that the Todas are allowed to eat the
771 flesh of the sambhar. In their former home, in the low country, it is almost certain that this animal would not have been a totem, and therefore it would be natural that on their reaching the Nilgiris they might be permitted to eat it.[1]

771 It is doubtful how far the Todas have an idea of a supreme
776 god. At the present time they speak of and constantly appeal to Swami, and they will say that Swami is above all the gods, but I have very little doubt that this is a recent idea. Swami was chiefly spoken of and reverenced by the younger men, and it is quite clear that the name should not properly occur in the formulæ of any Toda ritual. Nevertheless, the possibility cannot be excluded that the idea is old. It is probable that at one time there existed direct appeal to gods in the Toda prayer, and this direct appeal may have been to some supreme being who was addressed as Swami.

Apart from this question of the meaning of Swami, two deities stand out from the remainder of the Toda gods. One of these is Meilitars, whose cunning was able to deceive the gods, and who was able to perform miracles which were regarded as beyond the powers of the other gods. His story seems to show one way in which a god might rise above his fellows, and might become a supreme god, but this has certainly not happened in his case. There is not the slightest evidence to show that Meilitars is in any way worshipped as a supreme god. There is a much stronger case for the supremacy of the goddess Teikirzi. Teikirzi is said to be the foundress of many of the Toda institutions; the final explanation of all things in the Toda mind is that "it is the will of Teikirzi." She is said to be all-pervading, and

[1] I do not wish to lay any stress on this argument, for, as I have already indicated, it is possible that the eating of sambhar is a recent innovation, which has arisen since the advent of Europeans to the Nilgiris. Also I do not wish to indicate by the above that I commit myself to a belief in the universality of totemism as a stage in religious development. I only wish to point out that if this has been so, the Todas furnish a good case in which we might expect all traces of this descent to have disappeared or to have become so blurred and scanty as to be of little value.

128 601 *Straits Expedition*, with the modifications rendered necessary by the presence of polyandry and infant marriage among the Todas. In any one table the descendants in the male line only are given, descendants in the female line being recorded in the genealogies of the husbands. Thus, if one wishes to ascertain the descendants of Pilivurch in Table 1, it is necessary to turn to Table 20 recording the genealogy of Teithi, the husband of this woman. The names of males are in capital letters, those of females in ordinary type, and the name of a wife always follows the name of her husband or husbands. Under the name of each individual is placed, in italics, the name of the clan to which the individual belongs, or, in the case of a married woman, of the clan to which she had belonged before marriage. The names of those now living are given in Clarendon type, of which Mudrigeidi and Savdur in Table 1 are examples. The abbreviation i.m. stands for "infant marriage." The abbreviations d.y. and d.n.n. stand for "died young" and "died before being named" respectively. The latter implies that the child died within a few weeks of birth.

When the names of men are enclosed in square brackets, polyandry, and when the names of women are so enclosed, polygyny, is indicated.

006 In the *Torres Straits Reports* I have shown that there are definite reasons why the people should have preserved their pedigrees so fully. The pedigrees are not preserved for amusement nor out of idle interest in the doings of ancestors or neighbours. In Torres Straits the complex and far-reaching nature of the marriage regulations form the chief motive for the preservation of the pedigrees, while the transmission of property is perhaps of almost equal importance.

182 423 Among the Todas we shall see that the marriage regulations are far simpler than among the Papuans of Torres Straits, and in their case the chief motive is probably connected with the inheritance of buffaloes, the only form of property in which the Toda takes much interest. In the succeeding chapters we shall find several examples of social transactions in which the knowledge derived from the genealogical record has determined the issue.

1: Rivers E-5 (ca. 1901-02) 1906 Toda

accessory factor may have been the priestly functions of the Teivaliol, which have probably tended to make them more conservative. 162 184

Previous writers on the Todas have differed considerably in their accounts of the method of infanticide, and I regret very much that I cannot contribute any facts towards the settlement of the question. The subject was one about which the Todas talked so unwillingly that I made no great endeavours to arrive at the truth. A method which has been commonly attributed to the Todas is that of placing the infant at the gate of the buffalo-pen before this is opened in the morning, the herd rushing out and trampling on the child. Another less likely method has been said to be that the infant is drowned in buffalo milk. 847

The most probable account is that given to Marshall[1] by an aged Toda, who stated that the child is suffocated by an old woman, who receives a fee of four annas, and that the child is then buried, which, as we have seen, is the method of disposing of the bodies of still-born children. 114 847 182

There is little reason to connect the practice of female infanticide among the Todas with any deficiency in the necessaries for existence. It seems clear that at one time the Todas supplemented their food of milk with berries, roots, &c., but it is improbable that they were ever in such straits for food that they would have resorted to infanticide on this account. Marshall's informant ascribed infanticide to the poverty of his people, but this was probably said in order to excuse the practice.

In an earlier part of this chapter we saw that there is evidence of a former diminution of the Toda population. At the same time we see that there is evidence of a diminution of the practice of female infanticide, which would, of course, tend to increase the population. It would thus seem that there have existed among the Todas, during the last fifty years, certain factors tending to diminish the population and one factor tending to increase it. We may conclude that, but for the diminution of infanticide, the falling off in numbers would have been greater, and that the tendency to increase which 161 847

[1] Pp. 194–5.

1: Rivers E-5 (ca. 1901-02) 1906 Toda

595 842 851 The fatherhood of a child depends entirely on the *pursüt-pimi* ceremony, so much so that a dead man is regarded as the father of a child if no other man has performed the essential ceremony.[1]

In the only case in the genealogies in which the husbands of a woman were of different clans, it happened there were only two children, and that one father gave the bow and arrow for the first child and the other for the second.

If the husbands separate, each husband takes with him those children who are his by virtue of the *pursüt-pimi* ceremony.

595 847 182 There is no doubt whatever as to the close association of the polyandry of the Todas with female infanticide. As we have seen, the Todas now profess to have completely given up the practice of killing their female children, but it is highly probable that the practice is still in vogue to some extent. It has certainly, however, diminished in frequency, and the consequent increase in the proportion of women is leading to some modification in the associated polyandry.

178 182 595 It has been stated by most of those who have written about the Todas that the custom of polyandry is dying out, but a glance at the genealogies will show that the institution is in full working order even in the case of the infant marriages which are being contracted at the present time. There is, however, some reason to believe that it is now less frequent for all the brothers of a family to have one wife only in common. A study of the genealogies shows that often each brother has his own wife, or that several brothers have more than one wife between them. It seemed to me, however, almost certain that in these cases the brothers have the wives in common. In compiling the genealogies, one informant would give me the names of two or more brothers each with one wife, while another would give me the name of one brother with two or three wives, and would say that the other brothers had the same wives. When I pointed out the discrepancy and asked which was the true account, they usually said it made no difference and were almost contemptuous because I seemed to think that there was any disagreement

[1] For an instance, see p. 535.

1: Rivers E-5 (ca. 1901-02) 1906 Toda

between the two versions. I think it probable that it has become less frequent for several brothers to have only one wife in common, but I am very doubtful whether this indicates any real decrease in the prevalence of polyandry. 178 182 595

It seems to me that the correct way of describing the present condition of Toda society is to say that polyandry is as prevalent as ever, but that, owing to the greater number of women, it is becoming associated with polygyny. When there are two brothers it does not seem that each takes a wife for himself, but rather that they take two wives in common.

It is probable that this will lead in time to a state of society in which each brother will come to regard one wife as his own; and in a few cases it seemed to me that there was already a tendency in this direction. If this forecast should be fulfilled, the custom of monogamy among the Todas will have been developed out of polyandry through a stage of combined polyandry and polygyny.

One case happened during my visit which seemed to indicate that though several brothers might be regarded as husbands of a woman, the part of husband for ceremonial purposes might be taken only by one or two of them. In this case I was told that four brothers had one wife, but when the wife died only two of the brothers acted as widowers and performed the ceremonies associated with that condition. When I asked for an explanation of this, I was then told that the other two brothers were not husbands, but I strongly suspected that this was a mere device to enable two of the brothers to avoid the disabilities attendant on the condition of widowerhood. I have very little doubt that while the woman was alive, all the four brothers were her husbands, but after her death it became convenient to assume that only two had been husbands, leaving the others free from the restrictions of widowerhood. 595 765

Many writers have believed that the widely spread custom of the Levirate is a relic of polyandry. If it were true that the custom of polyandry is dying out among the Todas, this people might have provided material for the study of the relations of polyandry and the Levirate. It will be obvious, 587 595

153 In my psychological tests it certainly seemed to me the general intelligence of the women was very much lower than that of the men. Some of the younger women were as acute and intelligent as the men, but the older women seemed to me hopelessly stupid. They did not try to give their minds to the tasks I set them with anything approaching the keenness and interest shown by the men, and again and again I failed to obtain results of any value in tests which men understood readily.

[155] It seems probable that the intelligence of the two sexes is not appreciably different in youth, but that the social life of the women does nothing to develop this intelligence and everything to force its exercise into the narrowest channels.

●[182] It might, I think, be expected that polyandry would be associated with a subordinate position of woman, and there can be no doubt that the Todas show the association of the two conditions.

618 764 When a woman marries she becomes of the same clan as her husband, and this is a matter of some importance in connexion with religious and social ceremonial. Thus, in the funeral ceremonies of a woman, the choice of appropriate day and place, of the people who are to take part in the funeral rites and other features of the ceremonial are determined, not by the clan of the woman's father, but by that of her husband, and this even when the marriage itself forms part of the funeral ceremonies.

[591] 618 766 While I was on the hills, the widow, Kiuneimi (3), who had been living with her father at Nòdrs, died. Her husbands had belonged to Kanòdrs, and as a member of this clan she should have been taken to its burning-ground. This was, however, so far from Nòdrs that it was decided not to go there, but to hold the funeral ceremonies near the place where she had died. The proper funeral place for Nòdrs women could not, however, be used, for she belonged to another clan, and the body was therefore taken to a village which was not a true funeral place, and so no laws were infringed.

The funeral of Sinerani (p. 391) is an excellent example which shows how all the details of a funeral ceremony are

1: Rivers E-5 (ca. 1901-02) 1906 Toda

distinctly higher order than that they now possess, and if I am right in supposing that the Todas came from Malabar, it might follow that they brought their highly developed religion with them, and that although certain features of the religion may have undergone great development, the general result of the long isolation has been to produce degeneration. The study of the religion suggests that we have in the Todas an example of a people who show us the remnants of a higher culture.

If we could accept the view that the cairns, barrows, and cromlechs of the Nilgiri Hills were the work of the ancestors of the Todas, we should have at once abundant further evidence that the Todas have degenerated from a higher culture. We should have an example of a people who once used, even if they did not make, pottery, showing artistic aptitudes of a fairly high order which they have now entirely lost. The Toda now procures his pottery from another race, and, so long as this is of the kind prescribed by custom, he is wholly indifferent to its æsthetic aspect. I doubt if there exists anywhere in the world a people so devoid of æsthetic arts, and if the Nilgiri monuments are the work of their ancestors, the movement backwards in this department of life must have been very great.

It is easy to see how the Todas may have lost such arts, supposing that they once possessed them. The Toda now regards nearly every kind of manual labour as beneath his dignity, and if a people showing artistic skill in the adornment of the articles they use in everyday life should hand over the making of these articles to another race, it is fairly certain that the artistic side would suffer, and this is especially likely to happen when the artisans whose services are employed are such people as the Kotas.[1] Assuming that such a transference took place, it is easy to understand the complete disappearance of art even higher than that which the contents of the monuments show.

The use of the bow and arrow and the club in ceremonial

[1] The argument will hold equally well if the Todas in their previous home had been accustomed to procure their pottery from others, but had when they reached the Nilgiris to rely solely on the Kotas for help in this direction.

1: Rivers E-5 (ca. 1901-02) 1906 Toda

172 furnishes us with another example of material objects which
174 have wholly disappeared from the active life of the Todas, and
182 here again it is easy to see why the disappearance has taken place, for on the Nilgiris the Todas have had no enemies, either human or feral. This disuse of weapons has indeed so obvious an explanation that it cannot be treated as an instance of degeneration; and while the origin of the cairns remains doubtful, the only evidence of degeneration of culture is shown by the religion; and though it seems to me that the evidence here, especially that derived from the nature of the prayers, is conclusive, it may not be so regarded by all.

174 In the preceding lines I have put forward for consideration
182 the tentative hypothesis that the Todas may furnish us with
771 an example of a people who once have possessed a higher culture of which some features have undergone degeneration.
788 If we combine this hypothesis with that advanced earlier, that the Todas came from Malabar, we may suppose that the Todas brought the higher culture with them from this district, and if this were so, the original culture of the Todas may have been on much the same general level as that of the dominant castes of Malabar at the present day. On this hypothesis, it seems to me most likely that in their new home the religion of the Todas underwent a very special development, its ritual coming to centre more and more round the buffalo, because in their very simple environment this was the most accessible object of veneration. I think there is little doubt that the extraordinary development of the ritual of the dairy must have taken place since the Todas have been on the Nilgiris; and, as I have already pointed out, it seems to me most probable that the degeneration of the religion has been largely a consequence of the extreme development of this ritual aspect of their religion.

171 If we reject the view that the Todas are representatives of
174 one or more of the castes of Malabar whose institutions have in some ways degenerated during a long period of isolation, the most likely alternative view is that the Todas are one of the hill tribes of the Western Ghats who have developed a higher culture than the rest in the very favourable environ-

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847

[For the author's theories of the origin and development of polyandry and infanticide, see category 116, pp. 223-232.]

2: Marshall G-5 (1870) 1873 Toda

CHAP. IX.

attribute this failure in self-adaptation, in general terms, to the immensity and abrupt nature of the change he is called on to make, if he would pass from his free and thriftless hunting and warring life, to the quiet of a frugal cultivator of the soil or trader.

But this aversion to all forms of *profitable* labour, and incapacity for commercial pursuit, is not more conspicuous in the untamed Red-Indian than in the self-restrained domestic Toda, surrounded as he is by industrious tribes not far elevated from his own primitive status; from whom—had he felt desire to change—he could at once have adopted simple expedients, as sufficient for his own purpose as they have been for theirs. I will endeavour to account for this persistency in idleness, of primitive and unprogressive races.

In the first place, and as regards the Todas, I assume as if a fact established, what indeed has every appearance of truth; that their present mode of life precisely suits the constitution of their minds—any important change appearing to them to be for the worse—that however much they must certainly, at some early periods of their career, have suffered from the failure of supplies, owing to the increase of their own numbers, and to their having depended on one source of food—which must have failed—yet as we find them, their natures and surrounding circumstances are practically in a condition of equilibrium. That is to say, they have perfected a dairy system enabling them to live entirely at ease and without labour: and which, owing to there being a ready market for surplus produce, now places them in a considerable degree of homely comfort—a happy state, which is likely to last so long as the land affords room for the people to expand.

Although in the estimation of many, this perfect contentment with a very little may be considered a proof of good sense, and be held a great virtue, yet it must be acknowledged that the phase is not one the best races of the world would

2: Marshall G-5 (1870) 1873 Toda

000 think it ridiculous, or the knowledge of it superfluous to the rest of mankind. Far from its beliefs and practices being a rubbish-heap of miscellaneous folly, they are consistent and logical in so high a degree as to begin, as soon as even roughly classified, to display the principles of their formation and development; and these principles prove to be essentially rational, though working in a mental condition of intense and inveterate ignorance.' [1]

322 532 Our friends appear to *dream* buffalo. Sitting, apparently 'thinking of nothing at all,' a man will pick up a bit of cane or forked twig from the ground, and like the typical Yankee is supposed to whittle a stick while he speculates, so the Toda will employ himself for an hour at a time, splitting his bit of cane or rounding the little branches of his twig into the likeness of buffalo horns, as he muses. Children may be seen coming in from cattle-driving, with strings of these small horns. And these treasures are found lying about their houses and haunts. Two of them are shown in Photograph No. 15.

182 771 234 In the history of most, if not of all nations, savage and civilised alike, we may trace the alliance, more or less intimate, of religion, in its various rites and performances, with food; in its nature, source, or care, or in the occasions or symbols of its use. This correlation is certainly a marked feature in Toda customs. Though the Todas have no actual religion or system of faith leading to the performance of duties to a God, yet they hold to certain practices and certain habits in daily life, which are to them in the place of a religion; being performed with all the strictness and certainty that should be bestowed on sacred observances.

234 778 These performances or habits are intimately allied with the care and distribution of the *divine fluid*—milk. The buffalo is to a certain degree held sacred, as being the

[1] Tylor, 'Primitive Culture,' vol. i. p. 21.

2: Marshall G-5 (1870) 1873 Toda

CHAPTER XXII.

RELIGIOUS CULTURE.

Toda Religion, a development from a Material Nucleus—The Milk-giver an object of Deep Reverence—Milkmen are Priests, then Gods—Todas have a bias in favour of Light as the Manifestation of Divinity—Not Idolatrous—Do not make offerings to a God—Believe in Transmigration—Callous on Demonolatry—Influenced in religious matters by other Races—Todas of Turanian stage of culture.

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WHAT we have seen in Toda rites and ceremonies, is little else than the arrangements which a pastoral and communistic people have made for the provision and care of an article of food, doubtless at one time essential, not merely for due sustenance, but to their very existence in the land. These customs having through the course of ages so mellowed as to have acquired all the effect and influence of sanctity, we find ourselves now in the interesting position of actual witnesses to the growth of the earliest germs of religious belief and observance, as they develop in the mind of primitive man from the material nucleus whence they originated.

We note that stage, when the cow, the milk-giver and support on which the people have depended almost from all time, has grown from an object of the greatest solicitude, to become one of deep reverence, and—so far as they have yet learnt to express themselves—of worship. The flesh is not eaten. Its milk is almost sacred. The chattels of early herds—the cow-bell in particular—have matured into Gods, and dairies bear the conception of temples.

We find that common milkmen have, by virtue of the

2: Marshall G-5 (1870) 1873 Toda

sacred nature of such office, advanced in popular estimation until they are viewed in the aspect of priests. The high priest, from being a servant of certain Gods, has become confused with Godhead itself. A family styling itself 'sons of the Gods,' has developed—though without arrogation to caste pretensions—into a Levitical clan, inheritors of the highest priestly office; its males being prepared and chastened thereto in sacred groves, by the use of a plant set apart for the purpose, and by abstinence from sensual pleasures; the females of the entire tribe, being not only excluded from participation in such duties, but debarred approach to all holy precincts.

These points appear to me to embrace the whole of what may be held to be Toda—performed—religion unadulterated.

They acknowledge the existence of Gods, *perhaps* even of a Supreme God—Ûsuru[1] Swâmi—but their ideas on the subject are quite undeveloped. I think I trace in them a partiality to the regard of *light*—apart from fire—as *par excellence*, the manifestation of divinity. Their beliefs, whatever they may be, are so little attended with formal signs of adoration, that we cannot, with any degree of confidence, assert this or that to be their creed. Still I believe I have grounds for the opinion that these people have a strong bias in favour of *light*;[2] the natural bent of their mind being such, that if any other race would work out for them the idea, connecting Ûsuru Swâmi with some such attribute of divinity as light, they could soon be brought to exalt Bêl into 'a king above all gods:' the more readily if deference to the cow was inculcated with such a teaching.

I submit the suggestion as one having a possible value in determining the ethnic affinities of the Toda race: and as

[1] See note 3 of Chapter XII.

[2] Note the Toda words in Chapter XXIX., showing how frequently the word 'bel' occurs, even in my small vocabulary; see *dawn*, *light*, *silver*, *bird*, *white*. Also, the names of men, and of Gods, given in previous Chapters.

2: Marshall G-5 (1870) 1873 Toda

CHAP. XXV. describe the connection between such brothers as follows: 'Their fathers are brothers-in-law: their mothers being sisters, they are brothers.' An uncle is styled 'my little father'; most significant.

The marriage system I have described is elastic. It is capable of being modified in its internal working without change in the actual principle. Thus, when women are scarce, several men have to be content with one wife between them. But as women become more numerous, a greater proportion of men are able to procure a wife a-piece. This condition of permanent routine is supremely satisfying to the Toda mind.

The general expression for marriage is represented by the word kûdiken — I join.[5] Thus, 'Beliani is married to Nastufi' would be translated Beliani Nastufig kûdthchi, or they are joined to one another. But in addressing a man with the casual question of, 'Are you married?' the ordinary way of putting it, would be to say, 'Is there a son?'—Mokh vathchya? He would reply, Ha, mokh vathchi, 'Yes, there is a son:' or if married, but childless, he would detail, Ân kukh kûdthbini, mokh illade—'I joined a woman, a son is not.'

Similarly, the enquiry made of a woman would be, Belthta gavthchya?—'Is the neck-ring tied?'[6]

Mr. Metz has been so good as to describe for me a singular custom connected with weddings, which he learnt subsequently to my having left the Nilagiris: of which no sort of explanation can be supplied by the Todas.

When the wife has gone seven months with her first child, she retires with her husband alone, to the depths of the village wood, where at the foot of some tree she places a

[5] I am not certain that in the word 'join,' we have got the most primitive meaning of kûdiken. The Hindustani word kûdna, and its Sanskrit root kurdd=*play*, might be compared.

[6] For the modes in which husbands and wives address one another, see Chapter VII.

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have had as its immediate incentive an incident in which a Toda man who was ill was given medicine by a Tamilian Christian and told to pray at the Tamil Church in Ootacamund. He seems to have interpreted this as a vow to a god, such vows being freely undertaken by the Todas,[2] and on recovery he went to the church to do whatever rites were customary. The missionaries regarded this as a direct call to undertake mission work with the tribe and Miss Ling was appointed to be in charge. In 1904 the first convert was baptized, [kišker] (59, Kishkar),[3] his own name being used as a baptismal name along with Paramajyoti, a Sanskritic name of the Tamil and Tamil Christian type. This man was appointed a catechist to preach to the Todas and still acts as such. In 1907 the next converts, five young women, were baptized. Preaching and teaching were carried on from the beginning in the face of recurrent opposition from the tribe, although much of the teaching was only indirectly religious. When converts were made, economic difficulties arose since these persons were cut off from the tribal life, both by the tribe and also, though reluctantly, by the missionaries, whose aspiration had been to convert the tribe as a whole and retain the old economic structure while doing away with the religious and the more un-Christian social features of the tribal culture (such, *e.g.*, as polyandry, the low status of women, etc.) and adding agriculture to the pastoral regime. The difficulty was met by getting permission to use some of the abandoned Toda village and dairy sites and pasturages; on two of these the converts were settled and agriculture was joined to the care of cattle in providing a living for them. At both places a church was built, the more important having a turret and bell provided by the converts themselves, which Miss Ling, probably correctly, regards as an equivalent in the life of the Toda Christians to the sacred bells of the tribal dairies. Houses for the people, schools, and medical dispensaries complete the material side of the mission colonies. The number of converts has varied. Many Todas at various periods have undergone religious instruction preliminary to baptism without being able to take the final step. At present the number of persons living at the two colonies is

[2] See my paper *Toda Culture Thirty-five Years after* (Annals Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute 19. 101–121), 117.

[3] When a Toda is mentioned, he is placed with reference to the genealogical tables in W. H. R. Rivers, *The Todas* (London, Macmillan and Co., 1906), by the number of the table in which his name occurs and the spelling there given. The writing of Toda words in this paper is strictly phonemic. The phonetic characters used are in general those of the IPA. Small capitals represent retroflex consonants, except that [ɕ] is used for the sibilant. Italics represent alveolars, [r] being an alveolar trill. [ṛ] is a post-dental one-flap tremulant. [š] represents the abnormal sibilant (almost like English sh). [c] and [ʒ] are affricates of *ts* and *dz* type respectively. [ə] is a mid, mixed, rounded vowel, [ɯ] high, back, unrounded. When two vowel characters are juxtaposed, they together represent a diphthongal phoneme; [aɯi] in one name is the diphthong [aɯ] plus the vowel [i].

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about 50, including some wives who were Tamilian by origin, and all the children.[4] In 1932 Miss Ling returned to England after fifty years of missionary life. The Toda Christians who had turned to her for settlement of all their difficulties now found themselves without strong and sympathetic guidance, and dissatisfaction with those who succeeded her and quarrels among themselves, as well as difficulty in meeting their financial obligations to the mission and to Miss Ling herself, who had aided them with large loans from her own means, produced in the community what may only be regarded as disintegration. In 1938 Miss Ling felt compelled to return to India and her influence had already begun to heal the breaches before I lost contact with the community.

A few of the men have taken to other economic pursuits than agriculture. One is a chauffeur, one a policeman, another was apprenticed to a tailor. [kuaroɪn] (34, Kwodron) showed promise in school and later studied at the Madras Christian College in Madras, where he learned English with remarkable correctness and fluency (he was my best interpreter). He was employed as a clerk in various government offices in Ootacamund but got into financial difficulties of a somewhat disreputable sort, and finally to extricate himself became a convert to the Seventh Day Adventist Mission. [kanfuɪsodj] (14, Kunpuradi) has been a chauffeur but is now an agriculturalist. His English is rather defective, but he made a remarkably good interpreter and informant in investigations into ethnological matters, since his interest in tribal affairs is intense, and in the song-technique of the Todas, with which he is thoroughly familiar, being himself the quasi-official composer of the Toda Christians. Most of the members of the community work industriously at their agricultural life and, since the Nilgiris specialize in growing potatoes for the markets in the plains and as far north as Bombay, economic life is fairly secure and permits a standard which is in many ways higher than that of the tribe and than that of many other Christian communities of South India. The women continue to do Toda embroidery for sale through the mission.[5]

Economically, the Christian community has had to separate itself from the tribe. One link however remains. The pastures of the Christians become poor seasonally and at such times cattle which are not giving milk are often pastured with the tribe's herds in the dry-weather pastures. The man to whom such cattle are entrusted is recompensed with a small fee. Frequently the same course is adopted with young

[4] This figure is only a guess and probably a slight overestimate. The census figure of 597 for the Todas in the year 1931 included 27 Christian Todas, according to the enumerators, although the mission claimed 37. The Christian community has undoubtedly grown since then by the addition of converts and of births.

[5] See my paper *Toda Garments and Embroidery*, JAOS 57. 277–280.

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[5] See my paper *Toda Garments and Embroidery*, JAOS 57. 277–289.

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animals which have not yet reached the milch stage and which otherwise would unprofitably use up the community's scanty pasturage. It seems also that the Christians still retain some of their original feeling that wealth is to be measured by possession of cattle. They tend to acquire more and more head of cattle and because of the pressure on their own pasture area the superfluous beasts are kept with the tribe almost permanently or in alternation with unproductive animals. In these cases the man who provides pasturage gets the produce, milk and the resulting products. In all cases when cattle are pastured on tribal lands, it seems that it is the buffalo that is so treated; cows are kept at the Christian colonies, since the tribal Todas do not own cows.

The Todas live in economic symbiosis with the other aboriginal tribes of the Nilgiris, viz. the Kotas and the Kurumbas, and with the Badagas, who settled in the Nilgiris perhaps five centuries ago. The mechanism of the economic interchanges has not yet been described in detail,[6] but an outline of the Toda relations with the Kotas will be given here. The Kotas are blacksmiths and potters, and all the Toda needs in these departments are supplied by them, as well as music for the Toda funerals. In return the Kotas receive the carcasses of all Toda buffaloes that die or that are slaughtered at funerals, as well as certain other minor perquisites, such as cane for house-building, bamboo churning-sticks, and a certain amount of clarified butter. The interchanges are made between individuals, who are in a permanent and usually hereditary relationship to each other, referred to by the Todas as [keɾ], by the Kotas as [keʟ]. The relationship includes also the right of the Kota to obtain by purchase from his Toda opposite number such buffaloes and buffalo calves as he may need for his own economic purposes. In most cases one Toda has several Kotas who supply him, the relative numbers of the tribes and the Kotas' similar relationships with the Badagas making such an arrangement necessary. This economic relationship has broken down formally so far as the Christian Todas are concerned. But in spite of this, there is a tendency among the Christian Todas to retain the relationship with their hereditary Kota partners. They obtain their iron tools and pots from these Kotas and recompense them on a more strictly commercial basis than the original one. *E.g.* [kanfuʂodj] retains such relationships with the Kota who was his father's partner and has in addition formed a new relationship with another Kota. He at least still uses the term [keɾ] in referring to his relationship with these two men, though my Kota linguistic informant was insistent that the Kota

[6] Reference may be made to Rivers, chap. 27. Dr. D. G. Mandelbaum has made more extensive notes on the subject and it is hoped that his account will soon appear.

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term [keL] should not be used of such relationships with the Christian Todas.

In religion there has of course been a complete break. None of the tribal religious practices could have been fitted into the Christian pattern and there has been no attempt to do so, but rather a revulsion on the part of the missionaries from anything that smacked of the old religion (note however Miss Ling's acceptance of the attitude towards the church-bell mentioned above). This has gone so far that the missionaries who succeeded Miss Ling frowned on dancing. In the tribe the dancing is a part of every social occasion. It is performed at religious ceremonies, but also at funerals, ceremonies when the ears are pierced, weddings, and almost all other occasions when a number of the people gather. Even the children dance in play in the style of their elders (girls have been seen dancing as well as boys, though Toda women never dance). Miss Ling, realizing that the dance is not religious, looked with an indulgent eye on the dancing of the converts and in fact rather encouraged it than otherwise, with its accompanying extempore songs, at weddings, christenings and other joyous occasions. The missionaries in charge during the interregnum when Miss Ling was in England, with lack of insight and sympathy, forbad dancing. The reason given was that such a typically tribal activity would produce a hankering for other tribal customs and consequent backsliding from Christianity; possibly also a Puritanical attitude to dancing in general played its unacknowledged part. The effect that I observed however was that when the missionary guests retired from the scene of festivity, wedding or the like, dancing took place, and there resulted a regrettably un-Christian fostering of deceit and dislike of the missionaries in charge. It is to be observed that the Christian festivities are almost always attended by tribal Todas of the neighborhood and also by others from a greater distance who are related to the principals in Christian weddings and christenings. They are participants in the feasting and the males among them join with alacrity in the dancing.

The song-words that are composed during the dancing, as well as all other songs in the Toda language that are composed by the Christians, are of the tribal type and use the normal Toda technique of word and tune.[1] As most Toda songs are extempore and topical, so are the songs made by the Christians. There is an attempt to enlarge the verbal technique to embrace specifically Christian concepts and considering the rigidity of the conventions there are signs that the attempt will be suc-

[1] See my paper *The Songs of the Todas*, Proceedings American Philosophical Society 77. 543-600.

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Toda names were given at all. *E.g.* [kanfuɪsodj] gave no Toda names to his children, though his interest in tribal affairs is intense and his connexion with the tribe is fairly intimate. I cannot explain his failure to give Toda names, though a contributing factor is probably to be seen in the fact that his wife is not Toda by origin. In the few cases where I have recorded Toda names for the children of Christian Todas, tribal patterns were followed for the females. *E.g.* [tuaɪsmonguuɪʀ] (59, Tormungudr) named one of his daughters [sotjabuɪf] "spiritual power-flower," [9] which has as its first member [sotj], occurring in the song-language paired with [tuɪL] in references to the power of the gods or the dairy-complexes. There is probably in this name however a transfer to the Christian sphere of thought. This man's other daughter was also given a Toda name, but she is so generally known, even to the tribal Todas, as Mary that my informants were unable to remember the Toda name. Two girls recently born were named [piɪjiːʒfuɪf] "silver-flower" and [tyɪjiːʒfuɪf] (the first member [tyɪj] is not clear).[10] One name of a male child belongs to the tribal religious sphere; [kuaʀoɪn] has a son called [asojxuuɪrɴ] from [asojuɪr], the buffaloes of the [tiː]-dairy of this man's original patrilineal sib.[11] Another son of his is called [sinxuuɪʀ] "gold-horn," which has no sib-connexions; the formation resembles that of women's names in its use of [sin] "gold," but the second member [kuuɪʀ] "horn" is an element found not in women's names, but in male names with sib-connexions.[12] Similarly with [puɪnxuuɪʀ] "fruit-horn," [13] the name of a son of [iːɸxuuɪʀ] (21, Idrshkwôdr).

Tribal social customs have had in general to be abandoned. Funerals and weddings, for example, are conducted in Christian fashion, and the tribal manner of legitimizing children by giving a toy bow and arrow to the pregnant mother can no longer be used. A survival of tribal custom may be seen however in a preference for cross-cousin marriage (which is not prohibited by Church of England canon law or by English civil law). This is the preferential form within the tribe but operates with many exceptions. Consequently, marriage among the Christians can take place between those who are not cross-cousins without departure from tribal patterns. The small number of the Christians makes non-cross-cousin marriage obligatory in most cases. One case, however, is known to me in which cross-cousins were available, and here the failure

[9] *Ib.* §§ 26–8, for the formation.
[10] *Ib.* § 24 for -[iːʒ] and § 27 for a name with this suffix added to its first member and followed by a second member.
[11] *Ib.* § 9.
[12] *Ib.* § 8.
[13] *Ib.* § 28, for the element [puɪn].

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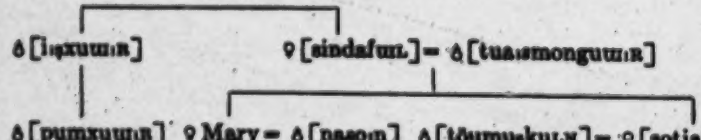
797 of the marriage to take place was the occasion of quarrelling and at-
582 tempts to penalize the person responsible for the failure. [iːʂxuɯːʀ]
184 (21, Idrshkwȍdr) has one son [pumxuɯːʀ]. His sister [sindafɯʟ] (Sindavul) married [tuaːsmonguɯːʀ] (59, Tormungudr) [14] and they had two daughters, Mary and [sotjabuːf]. [iːʂxuɯːʀ] wanted Mary to marry his son, her cross-cousin, but since the boy was not old enough, Mary was married to [nasoːm] (son of [teːpax] 20, Teipakh). (In the tribal system [nasoːm] and [sindafɯʟ] would use brother-sister terms to one another, since they were classified thus in the same patrilineal sib, but Mary could have been married to [nasoːm] in spite of that, since she would have been of another patrilineal sib and not related to him through a matrilineal sib; no violation was done by this marriage either to the tribal system or to the Christian system.) On the occasion of this marriage it seems that the girl's father paid a fine of one buffalo (or cow, I am uncertain which) to [iːʂxuɯːʀ], a clear carry-over from tribal custom, and promised that when his other daughter grew up she should be married to [pumxuɯːʀ]. When she came of age however, [pumxuɯːʀ], who is a ne'er-do-well, was unable to support a wife. Her father consequently went back on his promise and made arrangements for her to marry [tȍumuʂkuʟɴ]. [iːʂxuɯːʀ] tried to have the publishing of the banns stopped and even went in his appeals as far as the Bishop of Madras. The missionaries, who have no objections to cross-cousin marriage, helped [pumxuɯːʀ] by giving him cattle with which he might start his household, but he sold them and squandered the money. Under the circumstances nothing was left but to let the marriage of [tȍumuʂkuʟɴ] and [sotjabuːf] take place. The Toda Christians then held a formal meeting, assisted by one of the tribal Todas, [peːðoːʀ] (7, Peithol), and he handed down a judgment with the consent of the majority that the girl's father should pay a fine of three cows to [iːʂxuɯːʀ]. This was a purely tribal solution and when the missionaries heard of it, they objected vigorously. The community decided however that the fine must be paid and a story was invented that [tuaːsmonguɯːʀ] owed two cows in the normal course of events to [iːʂxuɯːʀ]. These two were paid over and the third was smuggled along with them without the knowledge of the missionaries.

797 [601] 584 797 184 686 627 [692]



[14] A marriage not permissible within the tribe, since the parties were of different moieties.

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This incident, without the missionary influence, is typical of tribal matrimonial disputes; in the tribe there would have been no objection to the cross-cousin marriage taking place as a formality to be succeeded when the parties grew up by a *de facto* non-cross-cousin marriage with a fine known as [ter] paid as it was in this incident. The formal marriage was barred by Christian custom, but the succeeding events follow the tribal pattern of [ter]. It is noteworthy also that a respected man of the tribe was called in to adjudicate; this seems to be usual with the Christian community even in cases where disputes are not so closely bound up with social customs.

We have seen then that in spite of the outward break with tribal culture some elements of this culture have been retained by the Christian community. The tribal pastures are still resorted to by the Christians when there is too much pressure on their own pasturage, and in some cases at least hereditary economic partnerships with Kotas are kept up and even new ones formed. Economic relationships with the Badagas were of a different nature, consisting mainly of a sort of rent paid by the Badagas to the Todas; these relations have disappeared completely with reference to the Christian Todas. So also, so far as I know, the relations with the Kurumbas, who figure in the economic symbiosis chiefly as sorcerers, one of whom is paid by each Toda, Kota, and Badaga village to keep all other Kurumba sorcerers at bay (a crude insurance system known elsewhere in India against both castes of thieves and castes who are reputed to be sorcerers). Converts retain their Toda names, even though in the case of men these have tribal religious significance. The children born within the community, however, in general have no Toda names; when such names are given those of females follow the tribal pattern with its frequent poetic associations and those of males are in a measure assimilated to the female pattern with at least one quasi-suffixal element retained from the male pattern. The matrimonial incident recorded in the last paragraphs shows that there is an almost complete carry-over of tribal patterns in this sphere. Finally, a most important element is the retention of the tribal dance and song-technique. In the latter we have a verbalization of thought and emotion expressed in the old familiar technique, with fairly successful attempts to adjust the rigid conventions to the new patterns, resulting in one case in a highly poetical expression of the Christian attitude to God in his role of creator and being to be worshipped by all creatures.

The Christian Todas can hardly be said to have reached a perfectly integrated state. It is interesting to speculate on what their future condition will be, though very unprofitable. The adult members of the

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794 184 563 177 [867] The adult members of the community are still in many respects Todas. The new generation however is growing up without intimate knowledge of things Toda and in most cases without knowledge of the Toda language, since there is an admixture of Tamilians in the community and all formal instruction is carried on in the Tamil language. New converts may and probably will be made who will introduce fresh Toda influences. But it is to be expected that the community will in time become so Tamilized that those born into it will hardly differ at all from other Tamil Christians and fresh converts will find few Toda traditions there to strengthen.

794 184 564 983 It still remains to discuss the attitude of the tribe towards the Christian community. Theoretically since the Christians have "broken caste," have given up the tribal religious and social rites and have adopted some habits which are repugnant to the tribe, *e.g.*, meat-eating,[15] there should be an absolute break in the relations between the two communities. The chief marks of outcasting in most Hindu communities are refusal of the caste to intermarry with the outcastes and also to interdine. The latter is based on the conception of pollution; a person who is not of the caste and who does not observe the customs of the caste, especially in such intimate matters as preparation and consumption of food, will produce equal uncleanness in the caste-members, necessitating elaborate purifications. The Todas are not in a strict sense a caste, though conceptions of purity and pollution are prominent in their culture. They will not, for example, go into a Kota village since the Kotas are unclean by occupation (blacksmithing and pottery) and by eating habits (meat and even carrion are regularly eaten); all transactions with Kotas at a Kota village must be carried on at the green outside the Kota village. Nor is a Kota allowed to enter a Toda village. Interdining between Todas and Kotas is non-existent. The Badagas however do not suffer from the restrictions that the Kotas do. Badagas may enter Toda villages and those in certain formalized relations with the Todas are invited to Toda ceremonies and eat with them at the feasts that follow. The European is on about the same footing as the Badaga, though he eats meat. I have been invited on several occasions to take part in the feast following a Toda ceremony and my sitting in the row of Toda feasters did not inconvenience them as that of a Kota would. The Toda Christian also is invited to eat at such feasts and does eat. He is not however allowed into a Toda dairy, any more than any other profane person is, nor is he allowed into a Toda house, in this respect being like the European. The European may enter the

564 648 186 [574] [184] [794]

[15] See *Toda Culture Thirty-five Years after*, p. 119, for the somewhat equivocal attitude of the tribe to this habit.

[113]

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The European may enter the
house if he takes off his shoes and if the cooking utensils have been removed from the house; this seems to be a mark of courtesy to the ruling caste and no Toda will trouble himself to remove the cooking utensils to oblige a Toda Christian. This, I think, is the essence of the tribal attitude. The Toda Christian is an outsider, with the complication that he was once a member of the tribe and still has all the links of blood-relationship and affinal relationship with the tribe. There is resentment because he has left the tribe, and on occasion the diviners *ex officio* and even other members of the tribe may charge the misfortunes of the tribe to the fact that there have been converts to Christianity and may commence open hostilities (wordy quarrelling and sometimes blows) if a Christian Toda happens to be present, especially if he has brought a European to see ceremonies. At the same time the pull of the original relationship survives in a measure and is clearly evident when a respected member of the tribe sits in the Toda Christian meeting and gives the benefit of his advice and when those members of the tribe related to the principals at Christian weddings and christenings attend these ceremonies.

The overt actions of the tribal Todas can be illustrated in more detail. The other side of the interdining relation works as follows. The tribal Toda when he comes to a Christian Toda house or ceremony will eat only if the food has been cooked by a man, either tribal in origin or born in the Christian community; this is a little obscure since food is ordinarily cooked in a tribal Toda house by the women and the question of menstruation pollution does not enter to complicate the picture.[16] It may be due to the presence of women of Tamil origin in the community or perhaps to the fact that women converts are not readmitted to the tribe even if they wish to leave the Christian community. Furthermore, the cooking must be done in a metal vessel and not in an earthen one; according to general Hindu views pollution can be removed from the former but not from the latter.

Readmission to the tribe of a Toda Christian male who was born in the tribe is always possible and has happened often enough. For example, [kanfuisodj] went back to the tribe on one occasion in order to marry a woman with whom he was in love. He was unable through illness to stand the physical life of the tribe, however, and became a Christian again. It appears that the chief ceremony in readmission to the tribe was provision for him of a new perineal cloth [kuuin], the fundamental garment of the Toda man.[17] A Toda woman, once she

[16] See my paper *Toda Menstruation Practices*, which will appear in the Dr. F. W. Thomas Festschrift Volume to be published by the *New Indian Antiquary*.

[17] Cf. the regulation that a man who has lost his perineal cloth is barred from going to a dairy until after sunset of that day.

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has been baptized, will not be readmitted to the tribe. Children born in the Christian community are not admitted to the tribe; the reason given is that they are not legitimate, since no toy bow and arrow has been given for them, and so they cannot be fitted into the tribal social structure. [alc] (3, Ultz), his wife [sirmul] (30, Sirmul) and their children attempted to return to the tribe; only the man was received.

Blood and affinal relationships within the tribe involve each member of the tribe in a network of rights and obligations. At a funeral, for example, certain people related to the dead person must provide buffaloes to be slaughtered, and every man in the tribe has obligations of this sort which he will sooner or later have to meet, while on the other hand when he dies it will be obligatory on others to provide buffaloes for his funeral. It is felt by the tribe that the Christian Todas still have obligations of this sort towards their relatives in the tribe. Though the missionaries object to the obligations being met for funerals, the slaughter being based on a non-Christian attitude towards a future life, it has happened on several occasions that the Christians have met their obligations, either willingly or unwillingly. [kerxuuɪR] (63, Kergudr) provided a buffalo for the funeral of his father [kanuɪs] (Kaners); I do not know whether this was voluntary on his part or not. In the case of [kaNfuɪsodj] however my notes are more complete. When he was a recent convert, on two occasions he provided buffaloes for classificatory brothers, [puɪnog] (14, Punog) and [kiškeɪn] (14, Küshken). He says that he thought it best to follow the tribal rules and to yield to the insistence of the tribal council. Recently, however, [nertnuɪs] (24, Nertiners) died, who had married [paɪuiːʒfiɪj] (14, Poidjveli), the classificatory sister of [kaNfuɪsodj]. Her brother [noɪnmuRj] (Nonmudri) and [kaNfuɪsodj] were the only surviving affines of [nertnuɪs] who could be called on to provide a buffalo for the funeral; according to the present regulations they should have provided one buffalo between them. [noɪnmuRj] had no buffaloes. One of the animals belonging to [kaNfuɪsodj] was at a tribal pasture under the care of [idjoɪn] (20, son of [teɪpax]). This was seized and slaughtered at the funeral in spite of protests by [kaNfuɪsodj]. It was finally arranged by the tribal council that [noɪnmuRj] should pay to [kaNfuɪsodj] half the value of the buffalo.

Other obligations are found on the occasion of a woman's first marriage. Her husband gives to her father his best buffalo or two buffaloes, and five rupees; these are the [kökuɪulj] "bribe." He also makes a feast for all the Todas. The father then gives the husband [aRpuɪn] "dowry," *i.e.* a number of buffaloes, at least twice as many as the "bribe," plus one, *i.e.* three if the "bribe" was one, five if it was two.

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He also gives a feast. If the father is not alive, the duty devolves on his brothers, real or classificatory, in his immediate family, then on the woman's brothers, real or classificatory, in the immediate family, then on the generation of her brothers' sons. This obligation, both in regard to "bribe" and to "dowry," is still maintained in most cases between the two communities. The missionaries in this case approve, at least, Miss Ling approves. About ten years ago the Christian [kišker] gave one buffalo to [keːnoʒ] (21, Keinodz), who is not a Christian, as "bribe" for the latter's classificatory sister [sodamut] (Sadamut), who was already a Christian; [keːnoʒ] then gave three buffaloes as "dowry." Previously the non-Christian [idjoːn] had given "dowry" for his Christian sister [lamdiɲj] (20, Numdeivi) when she was married to [kišker], the "bribe" having been given by the latter. When [kišker]'s father's sister [tuarʃuɲemj] (59, Turvalami) was married to [piθjoːnaɻf] (64, Puthion), both the latter being non-Christians, a "bribe" was given to [kišker] by the latter and [kišker] gave three buffaloes as "dowry." [kuaroːn], who got his wife from the Todas by carrying her off (the [ter] pattern), did not give a "bribe" or get "dowry," though it is clear that the tribal patterns demanded it.

We find then that the tribe, though it has some resentment against the Christian converts from its ranks and treats them in some respects as outcastes, yet retains with them some rather important relationships. In marriage affairs the Christian Todas tend to be treated, without compulsion on either side, as if they were still members of the tribe. In funeral matters the tribe tries to demand that the Christians should fulfil their obligations, though the Christians are on the whole unwilling to meet them. If we look at the Badagas, we find that Christian converts from their ranks are outcastes and that the original community has no relations at all with them. No Kota has ever become a Christian. When we go to the more classical Hindu areas, we find from missionary accounts at least (few other accounts have ever been given), that in many cases the Christian converts are entirely outcaste and that no relations are maintained with the castes of origin other than that of extreme hostility on the part of the caste (the picture is perhaps not so simple as this, but accounts are defective). Can any explanation be given for the peculiar features in the Toda case? It is possibly to be found in the general situation. The areas in which the tribe and the Christians live is comparatively small, the two communities see much of one another necessarily, the Christian community still retains cattle as a necessary part of its economic life and so has a community of interest with the tribe and moreover has had to depend on the tribe in part for

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its pasturage, to the economic advantage of the latter. Moreover, the tribe has come to depend on the mission for the sale of its women's needlework. Perhaps another factor is to be seen in the small size of the tribe. Every convert is related somehow to practically every Toda in the tribe and still uses the appropriate terms of address. The Badagas show a contrast here, for in a community of over 40,000 the great majority of Badagas that a convert will meet will be strangers and unrelated to him. It would be unwise to push any argument based on this feeling of relationship between the two Toda communities, and yet one suspects that the matter has its weight. Finally, if one must, it is possible to fall back on characterizations of the Todas as "a friendly people" [18] or as a tolerant people. Their hauteur and self-sufficient bearing has often been remarked, and as a complementary side of their character there is a lack of fanaticism in them. They know that they are a peculiar people (in anthropological terms, aberrant) and recognise that others, even if they are Todas, must be allowed their peculiarities. Hence their rather great degree of tolerance for the Christian converts and their retention of relations with them where it is possible.

[18] So my Kota informant quoted in *Toda Culture Thirty-five Years after*, p. 105.

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worship of Hindu deities can go on "side by side with the proper religion of the Todas." Vows are made to temples for increase of the buffaloes, for speedy completion of the rebuilding of a dairy, for children or for other objects. If the boon asked for is obtained, the promised vow is fulfilled; otherwise, not. In most cases a man when paying the vow goes to the temple to which it has been made, shaves his hair and beard, bathes, and hands over to the temple the gift he has promised, a small silver image of a buffalo or a dairy or a sum of money. Fashions change in temples, according as reputation for power rises or falls. Certain temples very near the hills have been visited in paying vows for a very long time. Visits to Nanjangud in Mysore State began according to my informants less than a century ago. Vows to Mariamma's temple in Ootacamund have been made only in very recent times. Most curious is the making of vows to the mosque at Nagore, on the coast east of Tanjore. This holy-place was learned of from Mohammedan ghee-merchants in Ootacamund. The first vow by a Toda to this place was made by nörnmȩ (Rivers' genealogical table 20) and paid after his death by his classificatory son ajrjar; this was before Rivers' time. One of my informants went there in 1929 by train and gave a silver buffalo in payment of his vow. Such offerings of images are apparently accepted and no doubt sold at a yearly auction of offerings, as in Hindu temples. Toda vows to a Mohammedan shrine are an excellent illustration of the syncretistic tendencies of unlettered peoples in India. The Todas, who know well enough that the place of worship in Nagore is a Mohammedan mosque, do not regard it as any different from a Hindu temple that has shown itself to be powerful in granting boons. They call the deity there a tȫu and it seems that it is really a Mohammedan saint buried at the mosque who is supposed to be the god of the place.

Apart from the outside influence just discussed, the only other influence that I have been able to find shows itself in a theological belief already mentioned by Rivers (p. 456). This is to the effect that the supreme god is ȩcmj (indirectly borrowed from Sanskrit svāmin), and all the other gods are his servants. So it was phrased by kinmȩ (Rivers' genealogical table 26; one

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with the special study that is the result of my second visit to south India in 1949.

A. GENERAL STUDY: THE TODAS OF THE NILGIRIS

A general study of the culture of the Todas of the Nilgiris has been presented so well by Dr W. H. R. Rivers in his book that it is quite unnecessary to repeat it here. Readers who are interested in getting to know these people thoroughly are referred to the work, which they will find quite absorbing reading.

In the following paragraphs I propose to give only an outline of the principal traits of Tota culture so that what follows should be intelligible. Some of the Toda institutions are so unique, or as we would say anthropologically, aberrant, that it is absolutely essential to have at least some idea of what they are like in order to understand the nature of the whole.

I will, therefore, first give this outline of Toda culture with a brief description of the habitat and social organisation of the tribe, and go on next, in a second paragraph to describe those customs of the Todas which, in my opinion, have a direct bearing on their institution of polyandrous marriage. Being by inclination functionalist in anthropological outlook, I can quite see that their marriage customs are linked to the entirety of their culture, and even, to some extent, to those of their immediate neighbours, with whom their ties are very close. But it would be too long and too complex to attempt to give so vast a picture of the whole intricate and inter-related pattern, and I would ask my readers to content themselves with the choice of those items of culture which I consider relevant in this connection.

A third paragraph, before we go on to the special study of one Toda polyandrous family, which I reserve for Part B of this section, will deal more closely with Toda polyandry, treating in a general description, all those aspects of it which I was able to gather during my first stay in the Nilgiris in 1939.

1. DESCRIPTIVE OUTLINE

The mountainous district of the Nilgiris is part of the State of Madras, in south India. The name, which means "Blue Mountains" in Sanskrit, is derived from the fact that, seen from the plains, the nearly 9,000

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married Nalsirwuf, ceased being head of his immediate family (although he was chief of the Melgarsh *modol*) and Pads, who already was the legal father of Mutnarsh, Kuddhue and Munbokwutn, became so in his place. The mother never has any very important say in family matters, and is treated as nothing more than an exalted kind of house servant.

As I have shown when discussing the question of Toda aggression, there is considerable jealousy among members of the tribe, in such matters as property and prestige. In sexual matters, however, there seems to be less of it, no doubt because their institutions allow for a number of outlets for their varying sexual fancy. Thus, the custom of *terershti* allows a man to carry off the neighbour's wife whom he covets, provided compensation in buffaloes is paid to the aggrieved party, and that of *mokhthoditi* for him to take as partner any woman of the tribe regardless of the moiety to which she belongs. There are other examples that could be quoted, such as, for instance, the privilege enjoyed by the lower class of Teivilkh priest of free access to all the women of the *mad* in which they serve and the Toda-Muduga exchange of wives of which Fürer-Haimendorf has spoken.

In spite of this, however, Kanvarsathi and various of my informants were unanimous in stating that sexual jealousy did exist among the Todas and, as they said, "more than it used to". There is a growing modern trend of resistance to *terershti*, the authority of the *noim* in such matters being often challenged now by an appeal to the Government. Again, informants claimed that the Todas did not take so readily any more to polyandry as before – although I, personally, could not see any falling away from this traditional form of marriage. The fact is, however, that jealousy with the Todas is not as curbed as it is with other polyandrous people. Because the property is divided between the brothers, it is as if jealousy were not banned as a serious threat to economic well-being as it is with others. The Todas, to put it briefly and in the language of polyanders elsewhere, "can afford to be jealous", and they are so at times with those outbursts of homicidal violence of which I have spoken earlier, when treating of the subject of their aggression.

Regulation of sexual intercourse in a Toda polyandrous household is again a matter af tacit understanding between the plural partners. Asked if there were any signalling system, my informants without exception ridiculed the idea, stating that it might perhaps have existed in the past but certainly did not now. During my entire stay in the Niligiris, I never came across any evidence of it. In the Melgarsh family, which I specially studied, it appeared that the common wife, Erzigwuf, had no

K 131 595 596 428 591 Tiva Polyandry. The Tiyas, living in Malabar, exhibit one especially interesting phenomenon: they are a polyandrous people who are patrilocal (that is, the woman marries and goes to live with her husbands), but also matrilineal (that is, the property that they have—and they do not have much, because they are common laborers—is inherited from the mother's brothers). Unfortunately, I did not have much time to investigate these people because the war broke out when I had only been at work among them for three weeks. Thus, the only thing I could note was that they are polyandrous, patrilocal, and matrilineal at the same time. I should like to return and see how this works out.

Ti 123 To 123 K 123 *General Conclusions.* I am afraid that some of these results may seem superficial. I was unable to stay as long as I should have liked among all these peoples. I did not know any of their languages well, and to really do good field work, one would have to live among them and not put questions to them as I did. However, I hope to return and to do a more thorough study.

Ti 155 To 155 K 155 As far as the psychoanalytical results are concerned, I think that they are highly illuminating, though not sufficiently ample to be conclusive. There are strong indications that, broadly speaking, psychic mechanisms, libidinal development and mental structure may be identical to those in the West. There are, thus, numerous instances of trends pointing to Oedipus and castration complexes. What I, however, really investigated insufficiently was where we should place the relative borderline between what is specifically culturally determined in psychology (such as traits due to family environment) and what is generally humanly so (such as sociobiological traits).

K 595 172 To 595 172 Ti 595 172 As far as the ethnological results are concerned, these can be examined from two different angles. Functionally, polyandry fulfils the same purpose as all other marriages: it is a social institution for the satisfaction of the individual sexual in-

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stinct and for the orderly social procreation of offspring. Formally, it is more difficult to say why this institution has taken on this curious appearance. As far as I know, authors so far have been rather at a loss to furnish a satisfactory explanation. Many, of course, have been given, with a great amount of variety in their choice.

To 174 595 182 162 K 174 595 182 162 Ti 174 595 182 162 To [849]

For instance, we are given historical explanations. In India they say people have been polyandrous for many centuries; that there are indications, such as archaeological (about the Heftalite Huns, 6th c. A.D.) and literary (the Indian epic poem, the Mahabarata), that the people in this area, both Aryan and non-Aryan, were polyandrous in antiquity. Economic reasons for this have been given; *i.e.*, that the country is poor, that nomadism among Todas or Tibetans, in earlier times, perhaps led to a polyandrous society in order to limit the number of children. Then, demographical explanations have been given, that there is an excess of males over females in this society, and that they have to be polyandrous for that reason. For instance, the Todas practise female infanticide and this is given as a reason for their polyandry. Their men drink a lot of milk, and some people say that the fact that they have more proteins in their diet in this fashion produces more male offspring than female. I do not pretend to know how far this biological explanation is true. Sociological reasons have also been given, namely, that the men travel and have to leave one brother at home with the wife (a reason which I hinted at earlier). In east and south India, the people known as the Nayars, who once could also be called polyandrous, had a very definite military organization (somewhat like that of the Sikhs in the north), and that has been given as a reason why a people is polyandrous: one brother can always remain at home with the wife while the other is away serving with the colors.

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It seems to me that these explanations are not sufficient. As far as the historical

To 829 595 121 182 Ti 829 595 121 182 K [121] would give the following interpretation of the polyandrous systems found: It seems to me that polyandry is "not necessarily a primitive institutional form of marriage, but that it is due to the psychological reaction of individuals living in communities subject to environmentally poor and insecure economic conditions, persisting, in the case of the Tibetans, through isolation from other communities, or, in the case of the Todas, as a type of defense mechanism against invasion by other cultures." I have not included the Tiyas in this definition because I do not know them sufficiently and would like to go more thoroughly into their polyandry before giving an interpretation of it.

Ti 595 114 212 Now, if I take this definition, instance by instance, I shall be able to interpret exactly what I mean by it. When I first say that polyandry is "not necessarily a primitive institutional form of marriage," I mean that, for instance, the Tibetans are all literate and educated people, with whom you can speak quite freely, who have a very pronounced sense of reality and do not in any way seem like a primitive people. It thus looks as if polyandry were a system entirely outside of the usual evolutionary stages of marriage, in which anthropology puts the matriarchal before the patriarchal system.

To 595 114 [182] [593] Ti 595 114 [182] [593] Next, I say that polyandry is "due to the psychological reaction of individuals living in communities subject to environmentally poor and economically insecure conditions," by which I mean, living in a physical environment which leads to a miserable economy. This economy makes them very interdependent, within each family, upon the help of each other, and this interdependence, in turn, which is stressed very highly in these families because of the necessity of sticking together under the difficult physical conditions, calls for less aggression among the members of the family itself and among groups of them. It seems to me that this stress on the condemnation of aggression is such that even something approaching incest